Sadiya,
Assam.

24th February, 1934.

My dear Harding,

The mail came in yesterday and brought the answer I have been waiting on since July. Malinowski has written from London, and the news is better than I had hoped. It can be done. Tati Lego had his schooling under you, and he trusts you more than anyone else here, so I would rather this reached him through you than through me. Will you speak to him, and help me get him ready?

The arrangement is a simple one, and I would ask you to put it to him just as it stands. He goes to London, to the London School of Economics, and starts there as a research assistant to Professor Malinowski, who is an old friend of mine and the best man in this field anywhere. There is no entrance examination to face at the start. He would not pass one, and the Professor knows it and does not mind. He will be paid for his work and taught while he does it, which is as good a beginning as anyone could want.

If he does well, and I believe he will, the School will enter him for a degree after a year or two, in anthropology or political science, whichever suits him better. After that, if he still has the appetite for it, he can read for a doctorate in law. You know the way his mind runs. He is forever asking how peoples are governed and how disputes are settled, and he has a gift for settling them himself. The law is the right training for that sort of head, and a man of these hills with it would be of real use here one day.

He is not to worry about money, and you may tell him so. The School remits his fees and will find him enough to live on. His passage out and home I shall arrange with the Professor. It is not charity. They want him because he is worth having, and nothing I wrote of him goes beyond what his work with me this past year has shown.

As for what needs doing at your end, there is a full year in hand. He would sail from Calcutta next summer and begin in October. Keep him at his written English above all, since so much there depends on what a man can put on paper. Lend him what history you have, and anything on government. Let him carry on with the work he has learned in camp with me, taking down customs and talking with the headmen, because that is the very work he is going to learn properly. His papers I will see to myself when I am next down, and warm clothing and the rest can wait a while yet.

One thing should be put to him honestly. London is a long way off, cold and grey for most of the year, and lonely for a man so far from his own people. He must go knowing that, and go because he wants to, or not at all. Tell him too that nobody means to keep him there. The whole point is that he should come home again, better able to be of use. And please say nothing about it in the station until he has made up his mind. Talk gets about quickly here, and it would do no good.

Send me a line by the runner once you have spoken to him, and tell me honestly how he takes it. If he is willing, bring him down to my camp at Denning in March and we will make a start. I am sorry to put so much on you, but there is no one else I could ask.

Yours sincerely,
J. P. Mills.
Indian Civil Service;
Hony. Director of Ethnography, Assam.

The Rev. G. W. Harding,
American Baptist Mission,
Sadiya, Assam.